

BELMONT MILL, COLLAPSED BUILDING  
(Nevada Belmont Mill)  
Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest  
Approximately 7 miles south of U.S. Route 50 on USDA Forest  
Service Road No. 623  
Ely vicinity  
White Pine County  
Nevada

HAER NV-46-T  
*HAER NV-46-T*

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD  
National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
1849 C Street NW  
Washington, DC 20240-0001

## HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD

### BELMONT MILL, COLLAPSED BUILDING

HAER No. NV-46-T

Location: Approximately 7 miles south of U.S. Route 50 on USDA Forest Service Road No. 623, Ely vicinity, White Pine County, Nevada.  
U.S. Geological Survey, Seligman Canyon, Nevada, 7.5 Quadrangle (1992), Township 16 North, Range 57 East, Section 1.  
UTM Zone 11, Easting 2060874.30, Northing 14266783.06 (southeast corner of structure) (NAD 83).  
Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest Feature No. F21.

Significance: The Tonopah Belmont Development Company (TBDC) was one of the most important companies created during Nevada's early twentieth-century mining boom. As ore deposits in its central Nevada mines were depleted, the company sought new claims to resurrect its fortunes. In 1926 TBDC built the Belmont Mill near Hamilton to process lead and silver ore from its recently acquired claims in the White Pine mining district of eastern Nevada. The small pilot mill employed the most recent advances in table concentration and flotation mineral processing techniques, and the company erected numerous other buildings and structures to support the mining and milling work. The site was largely abandoned by TBDC after a few years, but later owners used the mill and associated structures for smaller operations and added at least one new building, now collapsed. Today, although most of the equipment has been removed, the Belmont Mill site is one of the only intact early twentieth-century mill complexes in eastern Nevada. The mill complex is a tangible reminder of the decline and failure of a once-powerful company and, thereby, of the boom and bust cycle so common in the mining industry. The subsequent modification and reuse of the site for small-scale operations typifies the ceaseless hum of optimism that sustains the mining industry.

Description: The remains of the collapsed building are located on the canyon floor on the opposite side of the road from the assay office (NV-46-G) and the mill (NV-46-A). The standing building is visible in a 1980 photograph (see Figure 7 in HAER No. NV-46) and appears to have been of similar size and design to the workshop (NV-46-K), which measures about 24'-0" north to south and 15'-2" east to west. The building was originally rectangular in plan, with a shed roof sloping down to the east and walls of corrugated metal. It had a square window in the west end of the north wall and a rectangular, metal-clad pair of doors in the south end of the west wall.

Presently the collapsed building is scattered over an area about 80' north to south and 65' east to west. The remains make it clear that the building was wood-framed with 1-5/8" x 4" studs and doubled sill and rafter plates. The corrugated metal siding was 27" wide with a 24" exposure. Wall heights ranged from 80" to 96". The pair of doors measured 98" high and about 55" wide and were of crude wood-frame construction faced with

vertical beadboard (3-1/2" wide) on the interior and corrugated metal on the exterior. Metal strap hinges and a metal hasp on one door remain in place.

History: See the Narrative Overview in HAER No. NV-46 for a broad contextual history.

The collapsed building was not built by TBDC in 1926: a photograph from ca. 1940 documents that a board-and-batten outhouse or storage building originally stood in this location (see Figure 4 in HAER No. NV-46). The building probably dates to the 1940s or 1950s, when the site was modified for smaller-scale operations; it is visible in a photograph of the site taken in 1980 (see Figure 7). A recent archaeology report states that the building was used for chemical storage, although the basis for this statement is not clear.<sup>1</sup> Between about 1980 (after a site caretaker was no longer employed) and the present, the building collapsed. Presently the remains are in poor condition and become more difficult to interpret as the structure continues to deteriorate and materials are displaced or removed.

Sources: See HAER No. NV-46.

Historian: Anne Oliver, Principal, Oliver Conservation Group. Fieldwork for the project was conducted in the fall of 2010. Project documentation was accepted by HABS/HAER in 2011.

Project Information: See HAER No. NV-46 for complete details. In summary, this project was completed under a contract between the Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest and a consulting team under the direction of ajc architects (Salt Lake City, Utah), in consultation with the Nevada State Historic Preservation Office. The project historian was Anne Oliver, historic preservation consultant with Oliver Conservation Group. Matt Wallace, intern architect with ajc architects, was responsible for the architectural measured drawings and completed all fieldwork and final drawings with the assistance of Oliver Smith Callis, draftsman. The photography was produced by Steve Tregeagle Photography under the direction of Steve Tregeagle and with the assistance of Heath Brown.

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<sup>1</sup> Eric Stever et al., "Belmont Mill and Surrounding Structures," Intermountain Antiquities Computer System, 2008.